



Hezbollah Uses First Person View Drones Against Israel

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Overview¹

- ▶ Rapid First Person View (FPV) drones, which are based on fiber optics and make precise strikes possible at distances of dozens of kilometers while overcoming electronic warfare capabilities, have become a cheap and accessible weapon on the battlefield in recent years, as was seen in the war in Ukraine.
- ▶ Hezbollah began limited use of FPV drones during the previous war against Israel (October 8, 2023-November 27, 2024). **In the current war, which began on March 2, 2026, Hezbollah increased its use of explosive drones, and since the start of the ceasefire it has focused the attacks on IDF forces in south Lebanon.**
- ▶ Hezbollah reportedly operates workshops in south Lebanon and the Beqa'a Valley to assemble the drones, which cost only hundreds of dollars. It was also claimed that last year the Lebanese army seized a shipment of 5,000 drones which were smuggled into Lebanon, but dozens of other shipments have reached the organization.
- ▶ Reports in media outlets affiliated with Hezbollah and the "resistance axis" noted the use of FPV drones as a game-changers in the war in south Lebanon, making it possible for the organization to wage an asymmetric war against Israel's technological superiority, based on low cost, precision and flexibility.
- ▶ Hezbollah also exploits the drone attacks for propaganda, quoting reports and commentaries from Israeli media to strengthen the idea of a threat and make it seem as though Israel's technological superiority has been eroded.
- ▶ **The use of fiber-optic FPV drones enables Hezbollah to increase pressure on IDF forces cheaply while increasing their propaganda value because they are difficult to intercept. In ITIC assessment, Hezbollah will continue using drones while improving their capabilities and integrating them into more complex combat arrays.**

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FPV Drones on the Battlefield

► FPV (First Person View) drones are relatively small and controlled in real time by a mounted camera which transmits a direct image to the operator. In recent years, they have become a cheap and accessible attack weapon, as it is possible to attach a payload weighing several kilograms and direct them with high precision toward targets. The most common type in use on the battlefield are fiber-optic guided drones, which are connected to the operator by a thin cable which can reach a range of dozens of kilometers and which prevents jamming by electronic warfare systems.

► The war between Ukraine and Russia turned FPV drones into an important battlefield tool, used by both sides to attack armored vehicles, infantry positions and concentrations of soldiers, and exert psychological pressure on fighters who have difficulty identifying the threat until the moment of impact. A report by the French Institute for International Relations found that 80% of the casualties in the war in 2025 were the result of strikes by unmanned aerial vehicles, mainly cheap drones, calling it a "new pattern of warfare" (Reuters, March 26, 2024 and February 24, 2026).

Hezbollah's Use of FPV Drones

► Hezbollah began using FPV drones in the war which began on October 8, 2023, the so-called "support front for the Gaza Strip." On December 5, 2023, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for using an FPV suicide drone to attack an IDF post in the Metula area. Additional attacks were carried out, directed mainly at technical equipment, surveillance cameras and anti-drone systems in IDF posts along the border, most of them starting on August 25, 2024, after the elimination of Hezbollah chief of staff Fuad Shukr.²

► In the current war, which began on March 2, 2026, FPV drones were used as one of Hezbollah's leading means of attack. The first claim of responsibility was an attack on IDF forces near the town of Maroun al-Ras in south Lebanon on March 22, and since then Hezbollah has claimed responsibility for more than 70 attacks using explosive suicide drones. Since the beginning of the ceasefire on April 16-17, the drones were the leading method of attacking IDF forces stationed in south Lebanon, when 34 out of 61 Hezbollah claims of responsibility included explosive drone attacks (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, March 2-

² See the January 2025 ITIC report, [Weapons Used by Hezbollah Against Israel, October 8, 2023 to November 27, 2024](#)

May 2, 2026). Two IDF soldiers and an Israeli civilian who worked for the IDF in south Lebanon were killed in explosive drone attacks (IDF spokesperson, April 20-May 2, 2026).

► According to reports, Hezbollah operates workshops in south Lebanon and the Beqa'a Valley, where drones are assembled from off-the-shelf products costing between \$300 and \$400. Hezbollah also relies on the experience it gained in using drones during the Syrian civil war, learning from the operating methods of the Russian and Ukrainian armies, and using knowledge and technologies from Iran (Al Jazeera, AP, *Wall Street Journal* and Israeli media, April 20-30, 2026).

► Sources stated that in recent months Hezbollah had accumulated a large stock of fast, accurate FPV drones, while large quantities were smuggled into Lebanon across the border. According to the report, in June 2025, Lebanese security forces confiscated a shipment of 5,000 drones capable of flying 50 kilometers and carrying seven kilograms of explosives, but dozens of other shipments reached Hezbollah. The sources added that Hezbollah had developed drones based on fiber optics and had different types of drones capable of striking heavy vehicles and infantry forces. Experts noted that Hezbollah's capabilities made it possible for the organization to attack Israeli territory to a depth of 15 kilometers (U News Agency, April 29, 2026).



Hezbollah FPV drone (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, April 26, 2026)

How Hezbollah Reports Its Use of FPVs

► Media outlets affiliated with Hezbollah and the "resistance axis"³ have noted the importance of using FPV drones as a tactical tool on the battlefield, capable of undermining IDF technological advantages at low costs:

³ Iran, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Houthis in Yemen and the Shi'ite militias in Iraq.

◆ Hezbollah's al-Manar noted that while Kornet anti-tank missiles were the military symbol of the 2006 war, when they "shattered the myth" of the Merkava tank, fiber-optic based FPV drones were the current "prominent strategic surprise." The channel presented a report by the al-Ittihad Center for Research and Development, which operates from the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut, claiming the drones, through available civilian technology with operational adaptations, had weakened the perception of Israel's low-altitude air superiority, creating a new threat on the battlefield. Hezbollah had transitioned to the systematic, structured use of drones, a combat doctrine directing them at Israeli tanks, APCs, engineering forces, infantry forces and intelligence equipment. Central was the concept of the "lone pilot," the transition from concentrated capabilities to a decentralized model in which a single operator could have a significant operational effect. The drone was represented as making it possible for a lone fighter, with relatively limited training, to attack expensive, protected targets, creating an economic and operational gap between the cost of the means and the damage caused. The report concluded that the suicide drones "prove that the last word on the modern front is no longer written only in the roar of [F-35] fighter jets flying high above, but in the buzzing of small drones that charge quietly, neither seen nor heard, and strike deadly weak points" (al-Manar, April 27, 2026).

◆ An article in Hezbollah's digital news website al-'Ahed stated that fiber-optic guided FPV drones not only bypassed defense systems, they redefined the rules of engagement. The combination of radar, thermal and electronic stealth, and the ability to operate at low altitudes with a low signature posted a structural challenge to traditional defense systems, not only a tactical one. Improvement in operational ranges and payload weights enabled expansion of use from point impact to strikes on critical systems, including command and control infrastructure, shifting the center of gravity from destruction of means to damage to the force's "nervous system." In addition, the use of drones reflected a combination of advanced technology and of guerrilla warfare, while relying on cross-theater learning (China-Ukraine-Lebanon), and illustrated a transition to decentralized, flexible warfare with cumulative attrition potential. That strengthened the perception that the drone was not only another weapon, it changed the cost-benefit balance and the limits of the opponent's operational freedom (al-'Ahed, April 29, 2026).

- ◆ According to the "resistance axis" al-Khanadeq website, the drones became a factor reshaping the nature of the war and defining its rules. FPV drones were not intended only for limited tactical use, but became "a precise operational tool, creating a new battlefield equation based on precise strikes, low cost and speed of execution in a complex, attrition-prone environment," thus making it difficult for the IDF to establish fixed positions in the field. According to the article, the use of drones enabled the "resistance" to respond directly and quickly, for example the attack on an Israeli bulldozer engaged in demolition work in a village in south Lebanon which killed the driver. With the entry of drones into the battle, geographic depth was no longer the decisive factor, and thus south Lebanon became "a space in which new rules of warfare are imposed that limit the movement of the Israeli army and reduce its ability to penetrate and attack" (al-Khanadeq, April 28, 2026).
- ◆ The al-Mayadeen channel, affiliated with Hezbollah and the "resistance axis," said fiber-optic guided explosive drones were game-changers in the combat arena in south Lebanon, posing a significant challenge to Israeli jamming and defense capabilities. Sources noted that the technology not only improved operational capability but also had a significant propaganda effect, thereby contributing to shaping a new combat equation which limited the freedom of action of the IDF forces in the field (al-Mayadeen, April 30, 2026).
- ▶ Hezbollah and its affiliated media outlets used the drone attacks for psychological warfare. Videos of the attacks were shown on Hezbollah channels, echoed by channels of the organization's supporters, promoting narratives of "cheap weapons against expensive targets" and "no safe place" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel and "resistance axis" Telegram channels, April 2026).



Pictures from videos of an FPV drone attacking IDF armored vehicles (Right: Hezbollah information unit Telegram right April 28, 2026; and left, April 20, 2026)

- ▶ Hezbollah and "resistance axis" channels, quoted statements from Israeli media regarding the threat posed by the drones to IDF forces in south Lebanon. According to one channel, "The reports on Hebrew Channel 15 about the launching of dozens of suicide drones per week during the ground maneuver indicate a change in the balance of power, which misled the Israeli military establishment and pushed it to admit a delay in understanding the scope of this threat and its nature" (al-'Ahed, April 29, 2026).
- ▶ According to a post on a Telegram channel identified with Hezbollah, Israeli media noted that Hezbollah "had imposed a complex equation on the battlefield," which is based on tactics designed to force IDF forces to entrench in south Lebanon. The post added that the reports in Israel dealt with "failures" in coping with fiber-optic based drones which caused casualties among the forces (Hezbollah field Telegram channel, April 30, 2026).
- ▶ According to in an article on the al-Khanadeq website, the drones had created a significant psychological effect, "a sense of constant threat, damage to the sense of security of soldiers and the home front, and the erosion of civilian resilience" (al-Khanadeq, April 29, 2026). Lebanese sources claimed that the growing number of drone strikes had created a "public and professional echo" in Israel, reminiscent of the impact of anti-tank missiles in the Second Lebanon War in 2006, and which raised the cost of ground operations and the difficulty of maintaining prolonged presence in a threatened space (Lebanon Debate, April 30, 2026).